



**February 7, 2007**

**H.R. 238 – To repeal a prohibition on the use of certain funds for tunneling in certain areas with respect to the Los Angeles to San Fernando Valley Metro Rail project, California**

**Floor Situation**

H.R. 238 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Henry Waxman (D-CA) on January 14, 2007, and has not been considered by any committee in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress

H.R. 238 is expected to be considered on February 7, 2007.

*Note: The House passed the exact same bill (H.R. 4653) in the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress on September 20, 2006, under suspension of the rules by voice vote; the Senate did not act upon this bill.*

**Summary**

H.R. 238 repeals a 21-year-old prohibition on the use of certain Federal transit funds to tunnel in the San Fernando Valley area west of Los Angeles.

**Background**

In 1985, an explosion of naturally occurring methane gas blew up a department store in the Wilshire Boulevard corridor in Los Angeles, injuring 22 people. Concerned about the safety of tunneling in this area of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles City Council created a task force to investigate the explosion. The task force identified methane risk zones along the Wilshire Boulevard Corridor.

A subway line was being planned at the time, which has subsequently been built and is in operation (the Los Angeles Red Line).

In the FY 1986 Transportation Appropriations bill, Rep. Waxman added a legislative provision that prohibits the use of Los Angeles subway funds on any line that would tunnel through an identified methane risk zone.

In November 2005, a panel of engineering experts reported that tunneling along the Wilshire Boulevard Corridor can be done safely.

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